Legislation to Protect Against Cyber Attacks is Stuck in Congress; Israel Calls for Swift Passage

Hauppauge, NY— Today, Congressman Steve Israel (D-Huntington) joined local tech companies to call for legislation to better protect Long Island businesses and reduce our risk of a cyberattack. Technicians demonstrated how easy it is to hack into a computer and retrieve sensitive information, even with the latest anti-virus software.

Rep. Israel said, "Failing to protect ourselves from cyber espionage or cyber attack is to leave our intellectual property vulnerable to theft. We know that a successful widespread and potent attack could plunge us into blackouts, devastate commerce, disrupt communications, paralyze transportation, and more. Congress must get past its partisan gridlock before our nation is truly in danger and pass legislation that would allow government agencies to share information quickly with businesses."

Paul Trapani, CEO of Fuoco Tech, a local IT support firm, said, "I applaud Congressman Israel's efforts to make the general public more aware of cyber security issues. A lot of people that are not in the security or computer industry are unaware of how easy it is for a cybercriminal to gain access to sensitive information. While networks and computers have gained a certain measure of security, the growing pervasiveness of wireless networks, that are often unsecured, has created potential for more attacks and security compromises. In our industry we are well aware that the moment a computer is connected to the internet it starts being scanned for vulnerabilities."

Peter Goldsmith, President of LISnet, a network for Long Island software and technology firms, said, "The world has been made smaller through technology, with exciting changes happening almost daily. But technology has an enemy with people trying to create problems, so the need for Cyber Security is vital at all levels, from your home to our country."

Just last week, General Keith Alexander, the top U.S. military official in charge of protecting the United States from cyberattacks, reported a 17-fold increase in attacks against our infrastructure between 2009 and 2011. And, on a "preparedness scale" of one to 10, he assigned a level of only three. And our electricity grids, water supplies, computer and cell-phone networks and other infrastructure are increasingly coming under attack.

The House passed the Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act (CISPA) in April 2012 to ensure a better response to cyberattacks by providing sensible information sharing between businesses and government. The Senate yesterday failed to end a filibuster on their Cybersecurity Act of 2012 delaying action on the measure.

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